TIMES AND SEASONS.

"Truth will prevail."

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LETTER OF J. S. FULLMER.

Editor of the "Times and Seasons"—

Dear Sir:—In accordance with the solicitations of several of my friends, I send you the annexed communication for your inspection, for the purpose, if it meet your approbation, and you are not too much crowded with more important matter, to have you give it a place in your very valuable and interesting periodical. Treating as it does upon the first principles of the gospel, I should be glad if I could have the opportunity of sending it, through the medium of the press, to numerous friends and acquaintances, and in fact, to all concerned in this important subject, who cannot otherwise be favored with it. And as the gentleman to whom it was addressed, and of which this is a correct copy or rather original, expressed an intention of publishing it himself, which he has failed as yet to do, *after receiving my approbation*, he cannot, certainly, take exceptions at my doing the same at the solicitation of my friends.

JOHN S. FULLMER.

Nashville, Tennessee, March 1840.

Dear Brother Howell:—After an acknowledgment of my affectionate regard for you as pastor and friend, permit me to direct your attention without any further preliminaries, to a subject which, at first view, appears both novel and strange; but which, notwithstanding, will be found to be of the utmost importance to mankind; and, in my humble opinion, is destined to revolutionize all the various religions of the christian and heathen world. The subject to which I allude, is none other than a return, in this age of the world, even in the nineteenth century, to the purity of *primitive christianity;* embracing all the offices, powers and gifts, instituted by our Lord, and conferred upon his disciples before and after his ascension, and which distinguished the church of Christ during the apostolic age.

This doctrine prevails, to some small extent, in a good many of the States at this time; but is, wherever promulgated, of all others the most unpopular; and thought to be, especially by the various denominations of christians, an innovation upon the gospel, good sense, and established usages; and of course, without any authority from the sacred scriptures.

That it is an innovation upon the gospel and consequently also, upon good sense, I am firmly of the opinion, is a most egregious mistake. And it is only because it comes in contact with the established usages, that it is called fanaticism and rendered so odious with sectarians, but especially with the majority of modern divines. The fact is, that the scriptures abound with authority and proof that this is the *true doctrine*, and that none other was ever instituted, or intended to be recognized by divine authority.

I do not intend to be tedious in this address, though pages upon pages might be written in defence of what is here advanced; neither is it necessary that I should, since I have a small volume in possession, written on the subject, treating it in a manner so strong and lucid, that "he who runs may read" and understand; which I intend you shall have the privilege of perusing if you desire it, and which I am particularly anxious you should do, because I know your candor and love of truth will secure the subject a fair and thorough investigation, and will prompt you to act with regard to it, according to the honest convictions of your own judgment, disregarding consequences.

It is indeed the universally received opinion that prophecies, miracles, and the gifts of the early christians are no longer needed, and are, for this reason, done away. But I think there can be a better or more *reasonable* reason assigned than that. If miracles were instituted to complete and perfect the organization of the christian church, they must needs be perpetual in order to *keep up* such organization; and of course there can be no true church without them. If, to establish the disciples of Christ in the belief of the truth, they are as necessary to the prosperity of the church in every age as in that. For why was it *more* necessary, *after what was written by the prophets*, concerning the first advent of Christ, that miracles should follow and continue for a time, to prove that it was he, than that they should now continue for the same purpose? That they were, however, taken from the earth none will deny, but all admit. But was it not in consequence of transgression and a deviation from first principles, that they were taken away? This I think is abundantly shown by the history of the church, the writings of the apostles, and God's dealings with men.

Let me in the first place inquire what the gospel is, and for what purpose made known to man? This is an important inquiry; though one, upon the solution of which, I apprehend we will not differ in opinion. It may I suppose,

with propriety, be said, that it is the *will and testament* of our Lord; and has for its object the universal salvation of mankind, but especially them that believe; and therefore, not only the generations which are past, but also the present and the future are particularly interested. Now we know that a will and testament takes effect after the testator's death, and continues in force until the completion of the object for which it was made. But another very important characteristic belonging to such an instrument is, that it never changes; but its offices and provisions remain *unalterably the same.*

Now if we refer to the commission of the apostles, we will discover what some of the provisions in the will of Christ were; and in the first place we will find that they were chosen officers to preach the gospel; to establish churches, being endued with the spirit of prophecy; and power to work miracles; and, in a word, were in every respect duly authorized to execute this will. And in the second place we see that none, even of the whole human family were excluded, for they were to go into all the world, to both Jew and Gentile, and preach the same gospel to every creature. And after this remarkable declaration, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," (at the end of which modern divines always stop when they quote the commission) we find the following appended promises to those *that believe:* "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." Mark xvi. chapter:—Here, it will be observed, the various gifts were promised, not to the apostles only, but to all mankind indiscriminately, as a *consequence* following the belief of the gospel and obedience to its requirements. Now it is very evident that these promises are inseparably connected with, and are a part of the foregoing commission and proclamation. They are also inseparably ingrafted, in bold relief, into the gospel plan as *cause and effect;* and are equally indivisible. There can no other reading be given this passage without a flagrant violation of language, and, in a word, a perversion of the gospel. The result is conclusive, that wherever the one is preached and believed, the other must follow.

This doctrine is fully sustained by the apostle Peter in the second chapter of the "Acts," in quoting the prophet Joel, and by his application of the prophecy, and his advice as to what they should do who were pricked in their hearts. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues." And when some accused them of being filled with new wine, Peter stood up among them, and denying the charge of drunkenness, continued; "But this is that which is spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophesy," &c.

Now what do we gather from what has just been quoted? Why, that those who are to preach the gospel, must first be inspired by the Holy Ghost; and that the effect of the spirit as manifested on that occasion, was not confined to the apostles, but to be indiscriminately conferred upon the sons and daughters in the last days, if they obeyed the gospel, as is shown in the 38th and 39th verses. When many were pricked in their hearts and asked the apostles what they should do? "Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

That these and other gifts were prevalent in the early church, is shown in too many instances in the New Testament, to admit of a doubt: and that they should exist *at the present day* wherever the *whole* gospel is preached, has already been shown; unless we have already advanced *beyond* the last days; or, according to the celebrated Doctor Watts, have been removed beyond the bounds of *time and space.*" But Peter says the promise is to all that are *afar off, even as many* as the Lord our God shall call. Yet, notwithstanding these plain declarations, nothing is more common than to hear divines gravely declare, that they are the chosen of the Lord to proclaim the glad tidings of the gospel; which they tell us is the same that it ever was; admonishing us to believe and be baptized, that we may be saved; for he that believeth not shall be damned:—But instead of encouraging

us with the promises annexed, they say, but if you believe in the signs following, casting out devils, healing the sick, speaking in tongues, &c., you are guilty of fanaticism and dangerous heresies; and are in danger of the divine displeasure, unless you repent of your error and come to the knowledge of the truth. And they also kindly, and no doubt affectionately, tell us that we are among those spoken of by Peter, whom the Lord our God should call, and which he chose to do through their instrumentality. But that the promises made to the apostle's congregation does not apply to *us* nor to our *children*. And that, although Peter said it was not only to those who heard *him*, but to *all* that were afar off, *even to as many* as the Lord our God should call, it is not to be expected that miracles should be wrought in our day, or the gifts manifested; for they were long since done away, because no longer needed.

And why not, pray? Has it not already been sufficiently shown that the gifts were set in the church, and were invariably to follow the spread of the gospel? If not, proof is not wanting to substantiate the position, in the minds, as it would seem, of the most incredulous. We will therefore refer to the 14th chapter of the Acts, and from the 7th to the 10th verses, inclusive. When Paul and Barnabas were expelled from the city of Iconium, they fled to the cities of Lystra and Derbe, "and there they preached the gospel. And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. The same heard Paul speak; who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet; and he leaped and walked." The use I intend to make of this passage, is this; to show that the man of Lystra, got faith to *be healed* by hearing the gospel; yes, *simply the gospel* preached by the apostle Paul. Now it is, [is it not?] an acknowledged fact, that the same cause always produces the same effect. Yet who ever heard of men's receiving faith to be healed, by hearing the gospel as preached in modern times? Echo answers, *who!*

For a still further illustration of the subject let us refer to the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians. "Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant," &c., and verse 4th—"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. For the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given, by the spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge, by the same spirit; to another faith, by the same spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."

We already understand the apostle as speaking of the church. But to be yet the better understood, he continues, verse 27th—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." And to show the organization of the church of Christ, he continues, verse 28th—"And God hath set some in the church; first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." What! these *set in the church?* Mark that: it cannot be misunderstood: I stop short with wonder, astonishment, and delight; while I contemplate the future, and the dawning of that light which I believe is about to burst upon the world; and contrast it with the darkness, superstition and incredulity of the present day.

Above we have a plain statement as to what the body of Christ is, as a whole; also what the component parts are which constitute it a body; and it requires of course all the various parts or members designated, dispensing with *none*, to render it—complete. And as we have no account of his having more than one body, we are inevitably drawn to the conclusion, that *wherever* his body is found, *in any age of the world*, there, if it were dissected, would be found *all these self same members*, or component parts.

And, as if to answer objections that might be or perhaps were offered, because every member is not the whole body; the apostle continues, verse 29th—"Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?"—Here, with eloquent and *emphatic* silence, the writer draws from us a negative reply. And in the next verse I understand him to mean, and exhort his Corinthian brethren, one and all, that although they did not each possess *all* the gifts, they *should covet* earnestly the *best* gifts. And yet he would show them a more excellent way, by introducing to them, in the following chap-

ter, the *superior excellence* of charity; without which, though they could speak with the tongues of men and angels, they would be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And though they might have the gifts of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and they might have all faith, so that they could remove mountains, and have not charity, they were nothing, &c.

But here it may, perhaps be said, that I have been so zealously laboring all this time, to be defeated in this very chapter. For it is here written by the same apostle, that "charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

Therefore all which is herein contended for, is visionary and absurd. But I would observe in reply, that I was aware of what the chapter contained, and had well considered it before I began this letter. I know that this is the prevalent and popular doctrine of the day. Well do I remember hearing the last quotation above advanced, not a thousand miles from the "City of rocks," (Nashville, Tenn.,) by an able and eminent divine, distingnished for his profound knowledge and research, in support of his position that miracles and the gifts were done away, as having answered the end for which they were intended, and were therefore no longer needed. But as all men are personally accountable to God for the right use or abuse of what light they have respecting his will, I must be permitted to bring to bear the exercise and force of reason, the weapon of truth, before I yield in favor of such a position; and, unskilful as I may be, I doubt not but that I will be able to show, satisfactorily, to the unbiased mind, that it is, (and for want of proper consideration, I have the charity to believe,) a strange, and I had like to have said, inexcusable perversion of the original meaning. I was at one time, however, and before I had given it any especial attention, fairly routed by the verse in question; and I shall yield to the temptation to relate the circumstance. During my visit to the north last summer, I fell in company with one of the clergy of the Campbellite order, who engaged me in conversation about the doctrines herein advanced, which were attracting some attention in his neighborhood, and of which I had then but a very imperfect knowledge. But finding my mind somewhat inclined in their favor, he became very zealous to direct me in the right way, and to save me from deep delusion; and finally brought to bear this same verse; "But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;" &c. This was a knock-down argument at the time. I remembered of having both read it, and heard it from the pulpit. I felt defeated, and glad of it too, if found in error. I inquired where I could find the passage, that I might read it again at my leisure. He gave the desired information, and then we parted company; he feeling no doubt exalted at the conquest he had made. I made the reference, and read the chapter; and to my utter astonishment, and delight, more easily felt than described, and which I shall recollect to the end of my life, I found the passage had ever been misunderstood, and, taken together, taught an *entirely different* doctrine from the one, for the support of which it was brought into requisition. I felt that at least one link of the chain which, (as I discovered more fully afterwards,) had bound me was broken. A few days after this, in giving the true reading of the apostle's language, I made this same divine assume a superiority over *Paul*, as regards wisdom and knowledge in the doctrines of the gospel, in order to sustain himself in the argument. I leave it to your candor to say, whether this was not a *most miserable* subterfuge, or the utmost possible stretch of vanity? The great error lies in stopping *short* instead of reading the whole chapter; and thereby dividing and destroying the sense. It is true that the 8th verse declares that prophecies should fail; tongues cease; and knowledge vanish away. But *when* this shall be accomplished, is the *grand question*, and decides the whole controversy. Now, if a certain period is designated when they shall be done away, it follows that they were to *continue*, (by permission, for there is no *compulsion* in religion,) *until that period should come*. Let us now read the rest of the chapter, which, as it would seem, has become obsolete. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. But now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Although the *precise* period, according to the division of time into years, is not here given; yet the apostle is sufficiently explicit; so that we cannot, with proper deliberation, mistake the time alluded to. For in the 9th verse he declares that both he and his Corinthian brethren, with all their knowledge and spiritual

gifts, knew *but in part*, and prophesied *in part*. And in the 10th verse he congratulates himself and them, with the prospect of being one day delivered from this partial knowledge. So also in the 12th verse, that although they now saw only through a glass darkly, the time should come when they should *see* as they were seen, and *know* as they were known. Now it is a plain and incontrovertible conclusion, that if Paul spoke of the time when the gifts were actually taken from the earth, we must look to that period also for the perfection which he described. But instead of that, what are the facts? In his 2d epistle 2d chapter to the Thessalonians and 3d verse we hear him hold this language, speaking of the second coming of Christ. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," &c., and in verse 7th—"For the mystery of iniquity doth *already work*." &c. And by reference to the Revelation of St. John, written in the year ninety-six, we see that God sent a warning message to the seven churches in Asia, commanding them to repent of the sins which had crept in among them, or he would come unto them quickly and remove their candlestick; spew them out of his mouth &c. &c.

The "mystery of iniquity" spoken of by Paul, which began already to work in his time, no doubt elicited from him this prophecy, that "that day should not come, except there come a falling away first;" which began to be accomplished when the man of sin, the son of perdition began to reign and reveal himself.

Daniel also refers to this period in his 7th chapter beginning at the 21st verse. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and *prevailed against them*, *until* the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom,"&c.

But there was an end of antichrist predicted, and an end of his dominion, at the time when all the kingdoms of the earth are to be given to the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom shall be an *everlasting* kingdom. See verses 26th and 27th. This chapter covers the whole ground from the early persecution and apostacy of the church, until it shall be again restored, and the kingdoms under the whole heaven, (which is yet in the future,) shall be given to the saints.

But let us return from our digression, and make the inquiry; if Paul had no allusion, when speaking of the cessation of the gifts, to the time when they *did* cease, to *what* time did he allude? I answer, that *that* time has never been yet. For we know of no age of the world in which, not only individuals, but the *whole church* was as far superior to Paul, as a *whole* is superior to a *part*, or as far superior to him, as he was, when he penned this, to infant Saul, when a child.

But he had *emphatic* and direct reference to our immortal state, when we shall have been delivered from this mortal body with all its weakness and imperfection, and put on immortality; when we shall have taken up our abode in the bright mansions of bliss, in the presence of our Heavenly Father. Then, and not till then, shall that which is in part be done away. Then, and not till then, shall we see *face to face*, and *know* as also we are known. Then God shall be all in all.

But faith, hope, and charity or love, being eternal principles, shall abide the "wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," and pervade the heavenly host, and dwell in the bosom of the Father.

Having already transcended my intended limits, I fear I shall intrude upon your patience, and shall therefore hasten to a conclusion.

Having, as I think, abundantly shown, not only that the church was first organized by the appointment of certain officers, (some of whom are not found in any of the modern churches, and enduing its various members with supernatural gifts, but that both offices and gifts were to *attend* the church, and continue, in point of duration, commensurate with it, as parts of the body: "For the body is not one member but many." "And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body:" I say, having shown that the primitive christians endued with some one or more of the spiritual gifts, were considered, individually, as members of the body; and when taken collectively as the whole body: it devolves upon those holding and teaching a different doctrine, to give some plain and *positive authority* for dispensing with, and setting at naught the ordinances which God has set in his representative church on earth.

In law, a statute or ordinance enacted by the proper authorities, continues in force until it is repealed or a substitute adopted. And I contend, with regard to the case under consideration, especially as it relates to things sacred—that nothing short of a positive *repeal or substitute*, can justify the least departure from first principles and established usages.

I must be permitted to draw a short, but as I

think, appropriate comparison, (which this moment presented itself to my mind,) between the early christian churches and those which did for a long time, and do at present prevail. The former represent a complete and perfect body; full of life and vigor; wanting in no member; and all performing their respective functions with power and healthy action. The latter represent a body with some of the most important members *amputated;* and, in consequence of the loss of blood, (which is the life thereof,) occasioned thereby, become so debilitated and helpless, that even *life itself* is but seldom perceptible.

And this state of things, as was said before, is by permission. For man's salvation, it is clear, depends upon obedience; and is, therefore, conditional. To substantiate this, I refer to the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy where blessings and curses were set before the twelve tribes. Blessings, if they would do all that the Lord commanded them; and curses, if they deviated from, and disregarded them.

We also see, by reference to the 11th chapter Romans, that the blessings under the gospel dispensation are no less conditional. For Paul, speaking of Israel and their infidelity, says, verse 20th—"Well, because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou, (the Gentiles,) standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." This passage clearly proves, that the gospel, with all its concomitants, into which the Gentiles were ingrafted, need not have been thought *perpetual* with them, without a strict adherence to all its commands and requirements. Yet, notwithstanding this exhortation of the apostle; and when they are shorn of their former greatness, what do we hear? Why, that this state of things—this leanness, is not the consequence of *transgression*, but accords with the divine will and arrangement, and particular dispensation of the gospel. Alas, *Alas!* What unauthorized justification is this!!

And now, in conclusion of what is but the first entrance upon the whole subject, I will remark, that although I addressed this letter to you, I do not wish to be understood as dealing in personalities, but of things in general. Be assured that nothing could be farther from me than intentionally to offend. I only intended that, and nothing more, which I have often been exhorted to do; that is, "*to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.*"

I remain as ever, affectionately yours,

JOHN S. FULLMER.

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

Continued.

The scene was now entirely changed, for as soon as the devil had departed from our friend, his countenance became natural, his distortions of body ceased, and almost immediately the spirit of the Lord descended upon him, and the visions of eternity were opened to his view.—He afterwards related his experience as follows: "I now began to feel a most pleasing sensation resting upon me, and immediately the visions of heaven were opened to my view. I felt myself attracted upward, and remained for some time enwrapt in contemplation, insomuch that I knew not what was going on in the room. By and by I felt some weight pressing upon my shoulder and the side of my head; which served to recall me to a sense of my situation, and I found that the spirit of the Lord had actually caught me up off the floor, and that my shoulder and head were pressing against the beams."

All this was witnessed by many, to their great astonishment and satisfaction, when they saw the devil thus cast out; and the power of God and his holy spirit thus made manifest. So soon as consciousness returned, his bodily weakness was such that we were obliged to lay him upon his bed and wait upon him for some time. As may be expected, such a scene as this contributed much to make believers of those who witnessed it, and finally, the greater part of them became members of the Church.

Soon after this occurrence I returned to Fayette, Seneca County. The Book of Mormon, ('The stick of Joseph in the hands of Ephraim') had now been published for some time, and as the ancient prophet had predicted of it: "It was accounted as a strange thing." No small stir was created by its appearance; great opposition and much persecution followed the believers of its authenticity; but it had now come to pass that truth had sprung out of the earth; and righteousness had looked down from heaven—so we feared not our opponents, knowing that we had both truth and righteousness on our side; that we had both the Father and the Son, because we had the doctrines of Christ, and abided in them; and therefore we continued to preach, and to give information to all who were willing to hear.

During the last week in May, the above mentioned Newel Knight, came to visit us, at Fayette, and was baptized by David Whitmer.

On the first day of June, 1830, we held our first conference as an organized church. Our numbers were about thirty, besides whom, many assembled with us, who were either believers, or anxious to learn.

Having opened by singing and prayer, we partook together of the emblems of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; we then proceeded to confirm several who had lately been baptized; after which we called out and ordained several to the various offices of the priesthood. Much exhortation and instruction was given, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us in a miraculous manner—many of our number prophesied, whilst others had the heavens opened to their view, and were so overcome that we had to lay them on beds, or other convenient places: among the rest was brother Newel Knight, who had to be placed on a bed, being unable to help himself. By his own account of the transaction, he could not understand why we should lay him on the bed, as he felt no sensibility of weakness. He felt his heart filled with love, with glory and pleasure unspeakable, and could discern all that was going on in the room; when, all of a sudden, a vision of futurity burst upon him. He saw there represented, the great work which through my instrumentality was yet to be accomplished. He saw heaven opened, and beheld the Lord Jesus Christ seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and had it made plain to his understanding, that the time would come when he would be admitted into his presence, to enjoy his society for ever and ever. When their bodily strength was restored to these brethren, they shouted 'Hosannas to God and the Lamb,' and rehearsed the glorious things which they had seen and felt, whilst they were yet in the spirit.

Such scenes as these were calculated to inspire our hearts with joy unspeakable, and fill us with awe and reverence for that Almighty being, by whose grace we had been called to be instrumental in bringing about for the children of men, the enjoyment of such glorious blessings as were now poured out upon us. To find ourselves engaged in the very same order of things as observed by the holy Apostles of old; to realize the importance and solemnity of such proceedings, and to witness and feel with our own natural senses, the like glorious manifestations of the power of the priesthood; the gifts and blessings of the Holy Ghost; and the goodness and condescension of a merciful God, unto such as obey the everlasting gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, combined to create within us sensations of rapturous gratitude, and inspire us with fresh zeal and energy, in the cause of truth.

Shortly after this conference David Whitmer baptized the following persons in Seneca Lake, viz: John Poorman, John Jelly, Jerushee Smith, Katharine Smith, William Smith, Don C. Smith, Peter Rockwell, Caroline Rockwell, and Electa Rockwell.

Immediately after this conference I returned to my own house, and from thence, (accompanied by my wife, Oliver Cowdery, John Whitmer, and David Whitmer) journeyed again on a visit to Mr. Knight's of Colesville, Broom County. We found a number in the neighborhood still believing and anxious to be baptized.

We appointed a meeting for the Sabbath, and on the afternoon of Saturday we erected a dam across a stream of water which was convenient, for the purpose of there attending to the ordinance, but during the night a mob collected and tore down our dam, which hindered us of attending to the baptism on the Sabbath.

We afterward found out that this mob had been instigated to this act of molestation by certain sectarian priests of the neighborhood, who began to consider their craft in danger, and took this plan to stop the progress of the truth, and the sequel will show how determinedly they prosecuted their opposition, as well as to how little purpose in the end.

The Sabbath arrived and we held our meeting. Oliver Cowdery preached, and others of us bore testimony to the truth of the Book of Mormon, the doctrine of repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, &c. &c. Amongst our audience were those who had torn down our dam, and who seemed wishful to give us trouble, but did not until after the meeting was dismissed, when they immediately commenced talking to those whom they considered our friends, to try to turn them against us and our doctrines.

EXTRACT FROM ELDER H. C. KIMBALL'S JOURNAL.

On the 10th of September last, I, in company with Elders B. Young, G. A. Smith, and Amasa Lyman, started on a mission to the South. We proceeded to Quincy, and preached at that place several times. The indifference of the people, and the little regard they appeared to have for the truths of the gospel led me to reflect considerably on the hardness of their hearts, and situation. I went to bed and dreamed the following dream.

I thought I went out on a fishing excursion, and whilst traversing up and down the stream to find a good fishing place, I was astonished to see so very few fish in the stream, and they were very small and very shy. After travelling awhile I discovered some large fish laying across the stream, dead, and which smelled exceedingly bad. I then saw the reason why so few

fish went up the stream, and why they were so small and shy; it was in consequence of these dead ones laying across the stream. This is the dream—and in the morning the following interpretation was strongly impressed upon my mind. These dead fish represent the dead members scattered abroad, hither and thither, who are considered as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but are in fact but dead branches; they not complying with the revelations of God, which command them to gather together to the body; and as the branch of the vine cannot gather sap and nourishment from the body when separated from it, so the members of the church abroad, when commanded to gather to the body, cannot receive life and intelligence away from it, nor grow in the things of the kingdom of God as is their privilege; and such characters stand in the way of the gospel and prevent many from obeying the gospel through their neglect. I further thought that it was not impossible that the bad smell of the dead fish represented those people who are to be met with, some with a chew of tobacco in their mouths, and some a pipe, and others whose breath smells sufficiently strong of whiskey to sicken a sober man when he comes near them.

Much of our time was spent in endeavoring to remove these obstacles, by persuading the members to comply with the commandments given on the subject, that the channel might be cleared and a way opened for more live fish to pass up the stream; and we hoped that we should yet see the stream full of live fish, and the fishing places become exceeding good, and live fish plentiful.

TIMES AND SEASONS.

CITY OF NAUVOO,

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1842.

MELCHISEDEC PRIESTHOOD.

(*Continued.*)

There are several prerequisites which are necessary for the establishment of a kingdom; first there must be subjects to be governed; again there must be a king, to rule or govern; there must also be laws, and administrators of those laws; and as those things are necessary in the kingdoms of the earth, they are also requisite in the kingdom of heaven.—The Lord is that king; his people are his subjects; his revealed will is the law of his kingdom; the priesthood is the administrator of those laws;—and as it requires a continued succession of kings, inhabitants, laws, and administrators to regulate and perpetuate the kingdoms of men; so it requires the same things to regulate and perpetuate the kingdom of God; and if in the absence of laws and administrators the governments of men would become confused and crumble into ruin, so in the absence of the priesthood, the children of men are left in the dark pertaining to the laws and government of the kingdom of God; and although they may have some notions about a heavenly king, their ideas are confused, they have no knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, of the ordinances of God's house, of the nature of the government of heaven, or the power of the priesthood, of the present purposes or future designs of Jehovah; hence the conflicting opinions, the clash of doctrines, the diversity of sentiment, and the wofully dark and benighted state that the religious world presents itself in at the present time, to every enlightened understanding. Let the Melchisedec priesthood be introduced, and men be subject to their teaching, and their sectarian, narrow contracted notions would flee away like the morning dew; they would vanish before the more resplendent beams of the light of heaven; the anarchy and confusion that pervails among men would disappear, and the world would be organized upon principles of intelligence, purity, justice, truth and righteousness; principles that governed all the ancient saints of God; that regulate the angels of heaven, and by which Jehovah governs himself in the eternal world. It was through the power of the priesthood that the world was framed, "through faith; by the power of God." Hence, the heavenly priesthood consulted together before this world rolled into existence, and said, "let us make man after our own image and likeness." They possessed the power and the intelligence to do this thing, and knowledge is power, and the priesthood holds the keys of this power, both in heaven and on earth. It is the law by which all things are governed, and hence, if we have correct principles unfolded unto us on the earth, we have also a pattern of heavenly things. Thus it was said unto Moses when he was making the ark, "see that thou make all things according to the *pattern* I shewed thee in the mount." And Paul writing to the Hebrews says, "It was therefore necessary that the *patterns* of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are the figures* of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hence Christ officiated in the ordinances of God on

earth, (being a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec) and officiated in the same priesthood in heaven, in the presence of God, that he did upon earth among the children of men.

It is the Melchisedec priesthood that "holds the keys of the mysteries of the revelations of God; that unlocks and unfolds the secret purposes of Jehovah, and through which the children of men are enabled to come into the presence of the Most High: and without it no man can see the face of God and live." Enoch, in possession of this principle "walked with God," and through the same principle was translated by faith,—"he was not for God took him."—Noah had the same priesthood, and hence God spoke to him, and told him to build an ark; revealed unto him the pattern and dimensions, made known unto him the destruction that was coming on the earth; and when the ark was prepared told him and all his house to come in. Melchisedec, and Abraham also possessed the priesthood, and hence "the Lord revealed himself unto Abraham, as he sat in the tent door." and the Lord conversed with Abraham, and revealed unto him his purposes; for our Savior said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad."—Job also possessed the same principle, and hence he said on a certain occasion, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye *seeth* thee." Moses also had the Melchisedec priesthood, and hence the Lord spake unto him out of the burning bush; told him to go to Egypt and deliver the Israelites: and manifested his power in their behalf, through the instrumentality of Moses. He afterwards appeared unto Moses, and unto the seventy elders of Israel upon the mount; and "they *saw* the face of the God of Israel, and did eat and drink."—It was the purpose of God had they continued righteous to have made of them a "kingdom of priests;" but their iniquities separated them from the Lord—they could not endure the glory of a celestial law; the unbounded privileges of the gospel, nor the presence of Jehovah; but when the Lord spake unto them, they said, "let not the Lord speak any more, lest we his people die." The Melchisedec priesthood was therefore taken from them, as a nation, and Moses was taken out of their midst, and instead of their being a "kingdom of priests," they had only one high priest that went into the presence of God once a year, where he "atoned for his own sins, and for the sins of the people." They were stript of the greater blessings connected with the Melchisedec priesthood; they were left only with the Aaronic; with the law of carnal commandments and ordinances, a yoke that the apostles said, "neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." There were individual prophets among them who had the priesthood, and testified of great events; yet they "sought what the spirit within them did signify," when it testified concerning the coming of Christ and the glory that should follow; to whom it was revealed; that not unto them, but unto us these blessings pertained. Ezekiel "saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple." Jeremiah, Daniel, and others, had great manifestations. Elijah possessed much of the power of God, and had many revelations; and when he was about to be translated, Elisha prayed that a double portion of his spirit might rest upon him, but Elijah said "thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou *see* me when I am taken away from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." Here we may pause and inquire why it was that Elijah made this statement unto Elisha? Because he having the Melchisedec priesthood, knew that it held the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations of God, and although he did not know whether he could receive his request or not, it being the gift of God, he did know that if he could *see* him after he ascended, that he would possess that power; and when Elijah ascended in a chariot of fire—"Elisha saw it, and he cried my father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof,"—he ran and took the cloak of Elijah, smote the river with it and cried, "where is the Lord God of Elijah," the power of God divided the water and he knew that his request was granted.

With the exception, however, of a few isolated individuals, who were scattered here and there, like lonely sparrows upon a house top, the children of Israel were destitute of the Melchisedec priesthood—"the law was added because of transgression; and they were placed "under a schoolmaster until Christ;" who, when he came, was a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec; restored the same priesthood—the same gospel, and placed it within the reach of the children of men, to obtain the same blessings, privileges and glory; and of entering into the same kingdom that the ancient saints had done before the transgression of the children of Israel. "To as many as believed to them gave he power to become the sons of God," which power they possessed not before: "The kingdom of God was now preached, and all men rushed into it," and Jew, and Gentile had the privilege then of becoming, "a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people;" a privilege which the Jews might heretofore have enjoyed, but lost in consequence of transgression.

A SINGULAR CASE OF HERESY.

We had the following handed to us for publication, and had we not been somewhat conversant with the folly of sectarianism, we could not have believed that a body of church officers could have been found in the United States, so egregiously ignorant as those who formed the tribunal, at which the following excommunicating sentence was passed.

Resolved. That William Seichrist be excluded from the fellowship of this church for embracing and maintaining a heresy, to wit:—Doctrines peculiar to a late sect called Mormons or Latter-Day Saints, that miracles can be wrought through the instrumentality of Faith, that special Revelations from God are now given to men, and that godly men are now endowed with the gift of Prophecy, such as to foretell future events.

WILLIAM BENSON, Ch. Clk.

Sept. 28, 1842.

I do certify the above resolution to be a true copy of the original, excluding my son from the fellowship of the First Regular Baptist Church of the City of Alleghany, Alleghany County, Pennsylvania.

Moderator, Deacon John Beck,
Ch. Clk., Dea. Wm. Benson.

C. SEICHRIST.

The crime with which Mr. Seichrist stands charged is that of heresy; and that not only of believing it but "embracing and maintaining" it. Now as heresies are at all times to be dreaded, it is of the most paramount importance that we be enabled to detect heretical doctrines and abide by the truth; for Paul prophesies that "men will bring in damnable heresies," therefore if heresies are damnable in their nature, those that embrace and maintain them must be damned, and consequently are not fit members of a christian community. But now for the heresies referred to.

Heresy 1st. "Doctrines peculiar to a late sect called Mormons, or Latter-Day Saints; that miracles can be wrought, through the instrumentality of faith."

I always thought that every school-boy who had read his bible believed this thing! for the scripture says, "all things are possible to them that believe." By faith Moses divided the Red Sea; by faith Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and the moon in the valley of Adjejon; these men must have been strongly tinctured, with doctrines peculiar to the "Latter-Day Saints,' and Paul must have been a notorious heretic for he says that, "by faith they wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, waxed valiant in fight, put to flight the armies of the aliens, out of weakness were made strong"—that "by faith they subdued kingdoms," and through faith "women received their dead to life," and others were tortured not accepting deliverance;" that Enoch was translated by it; and that "through faith the worlds were framed." He further states that "without faith it is impossible to please God." These characters must all of them have been notorious heretics, for they all believed that miracles could be wrought by faith; and it was very fortunate for them, that they were not members of the first regular Baptist Church of the city of Allegany or they would have been expelled, for holding doctrines peculiar to the Latter-Day Saints; but what made their case worse was that, they not only entertained these doctrines while alive; but they "*all* died in faith," therefore we may reasonably expect that there will be a goodly number of them in the eternal world, that hold the same doctrines as the Latter-Day Saints.

Heresy 2d. "That special revelations from God, are now given to men"

Noah had it revealed to him that God was going to destroy the world by water, and that he should build an ark. Moses had it revealed unto him, that he should lead the children of Israel from Egypt to Palestine; Abraham, and Lot, had it revealed to them that Sodom, and Gomorrah, should be destroyed; it was revealed to Jonah, that Ninevah should be destroyed except they repented; to Jeremiah that Babylon should be overthrown; to Isaiah that Jesus should appear—be rejected, and crucified; it was revealed to our Savior that Jerusalem should be destroyed; and that there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down. These were all special revelations, and they of course did not belong to the First Regular Baptist church or they would have been expelled by them.—Agabus, Peter, Paul, John, all of them had special revelations, and of course did not belong to the Baptist church: in fact the Bible is chiefly made up of revelation; and so far as that testimony goes, they are as old as Adam, as modern as John, and as scriptural as the Old and New Testaments.

But this may not be the difficulty; perhaps they might not consider it heresy for the people in those days to have special revelations, that God has changed, and that what was orthodox then, is now heresy—the board may have taken this into consideration, or they may not: they have not informed us; they have stated that they consider it heresy to believe that "special revelations" from God, are *now* given to men—

it the scripture is any testimony of what should be given to men; we can adduce it. Jeremiah in speaking concerning the last days says, "I will *reveal* unto them the abundance of peace and truth." Isaiah says upon the same subject "I will restore their judges as at the first; and their counsellors as at the beginning," and if this is ever done there will unquestionably be some, *special revelations from God;* for if any one like Moses or Aaron comes they will have special revelations; but it will be woe to the people that have them, or believe in them; if they belong to the First Regular Baptist Church, for they would immediately bring them before their tribunal, and excommunicate them for heresy.

Heresy 3rd. Believing "that godly men are now endowed with the gift of prophecy."

Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Habbakkuk, Malachi; and a host of others, in the Old Testament, prophesied and foretold future events; and Jesus, Peter, Paul, John, James, Jude, Phillip's daughters, and almost whole churches in the New Testament, prophesied and *foretold future events;* and they all must certainly have been charged with the crime of heresy, if God has not changed; according to the opinions of the Baptist Church, which we are told is truly orthodox. And Joel in speaking concerning our day, says, "it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions; and upon my servants, and handmaids, I will pour out of my spirit, and they shall prophesy."—Now unless it can be made to appear that we have taken a tremendous leap from the last days, to the first days, we shall have men like Joseph, dreaming dreams; men like Isaiah, and Daniel seeing visions; men like Jeremiah, Hosea, Peter, Paul, John and James; foretelling future events: in fact the spirit of the Lord will rest upon his servants, and handmaids, and they will prophesy: and there will be such a turning over among the regular Baptists as was never heard of before.

It must have been the case, that the antedeluvians belonged to the First Regular Baptist Church; for they were unbelievers in prophecy, and in foretelling future events; the inhabitants of Sodom, and Gomorrah, must have belonged to the same order; for they did not believe in these things; the Pharisees also, for they cast out Jesus for being a prophet; and when he was blindfolded, smote him, and tauntingly said, "prophesy who smote thee:" in fact the *Regular* Baptist Church is spoken of by Paul; he says that "the time will come when men will not endure *sound doctrine;* but after their own lusts they will heap unto themselves teachers, who will turn away their ears from the truth, and they will be turned unto fables,"—that they "will have a form of godliness but *deny the power;*" and our Savior says, that "they will cast you out of their synagogues; and the time will come, when he that killeth you will think he doeth God service." The first Regular Baptist Church have fulfilled the first part of this; and some of the orthodox in Missouri, the second; so that Br. Wm. Seichrist need not be disappointed. The thing is spoken of by the prophets; and Deacon Beck, and Deacon Benson; and the board at which he was tried, have acted in the spirit of their calling—have excommunicated him for heresies that were considered dangerous, in every age, by the same church; that the church have acted upon true orthodox principles; and that he has been dealt with as Peter, John, and Paul, and as all other heretics have been dealt with, by the First Regular Baptist Church in all ages.

From the Baltimore Clipper.

MORMONS, OR LATTER DAY SAINTS.

"This sect has excited considerable attention through the Union, in consequence of various publications by Bennett and others who had belonged to the society, in which the members were charged with blasphemy, immorality and other offences. It is not to be wondered at that opinions, formed upon such representations, should have been entirely adverse to the Mormons. We acknowledge that we looked upon them as a mixture of interested and heartless knaves and deluded enthusiasts. The perusal of the Mormon paper lately published in this city confirmed us in this opinion; but on Tuesday evening last we attended the Lecture or Sermon delivered by Mr. Winchester, a professor and preacher of the Mormon faith. He opened the services with a prayer, unexceptionable in language and spirit, and such as might well have been delivered from any pulpit in the city. He then commenced his discourse, in which he took occasion to give a brief outline of the Mormon faith. He said that they had been charged with substituting the Book of Mormon for the Bible: this was not so; it was considered only as an historical account of a people, communicated, (we think we understood him to say) supernaturally—it neither added to nor subtracted from the Bible, which the Mormons fully recognized and believed in. He said that he had nothing to disguise as to his religious principles, but on the contrary desired

to make them generally known that they might be correctly judged of. The Mormons were Christians in belief, and looked for the second Advent of Christ—when he shall come, surrounded by the angels of Heaven to dwell in person upon the earth—that he will be met by the spirits of those who are justified, and by the saints who may then dwell on earth—that the earth shall be then purified by fire so as to be made a fit residence for the heavenly host during the term of the Millennium, which will at that time commence—that the signs which are to precede that event are now transpiring, and that, although he did not pretend to determine the precise period of the Millenium, he believed that it was at hand, &c. He quoted various passages from scripture to sustain his opinions—and thought the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days and the hallowing of the seventh as a day of rest, indicated that at the termination of six thousand years, the Sabbath or Millenium of a thousand years shall commence.

He spoke of the various publications of Bennett and others, and of the prejudices which they had necessarily excited—that the Mormons were charged with sanctioning a community of wives and of goods, with polygamy, and various other enormities, not one word of which was true. He had belonged to the society almost from its origin, and had always seen vice discountenanced as in other societies. Members retained their own property; were confined to one wife; and required to live morally and uprightly, and were subject to be expelled for misconduct. This was the case with Bennett, who had been expelled for his deviations from virtue. In building churches members contributed what they chose voluntarily, in money or labor, and there was no compulsion. The society is governed by rules accessible to all; some of which he read, and to which there could be no exception.

We understood Mr. Winchester to say, that he will endeavor in a few weeks, to deliver a regular course of lectures, explanatory of the belief of the Mormons, in which he will disguise nothing. However men may differ with him, he is evidently sincere in the faith he professes, and is entitled to be treated with respectful attention. Whatever may be the peculiar notions of the sect to which he is attached as to the time and manner of the fulfilment of certain prophecies—or, however erroneous may be the pretended origin of the Book of Mormon, yet, as the Bible is recognized as their guide of Faith, we do not think that the Mormons should be made objects either of ridicule or persecution. We confess that Mr. Winchester has changed our opinion of the sect; for we held them in contempt if not in abhorrence, from the representations we had read of them, whereas, if what Mr. Winchester states be true (and we have no reason to doubt him,) we can recognize them as professing Christians, tinged with peculiarities on particular points."

We are pleased to find that Elder Winchester is preaching in the city of Baltimore, as he is an intelligent, prudent, and faithful young man, and fully competent to teach the principles of eternal truth; and we are persuaded that if the editor of the "Baltimore Clipper," (who has spoken so honorably of him and his lecture) should hear him deliver a course of lectures, the force of those glorious truths which he will be able to advance, will produce a greater revolution in his mind than he has yet experienced, or anticipated, in regard to Mormonism; and will be the means of bringing many of the intelligent and respectable citizens of Baltimore to a knowledge of the truth, and to obey those glorious principles which God has revealed for the salvation of the human family.

We have lately perused a "Synopsis of the Holy Scriptures, and Concordance," published by Br. Winchester, and we must say that it does credit to its author. It is a neat little pocket edition of 256 pages. It contains copious extracts of the scriptures, on the most prominent articles of the faith of the Latter Day Saints, and an appendix containing an "Epitome of Ecclesiastical History," from our Savior's time until the present day.

We have been requested by President Hyrum Smith to insert this notice,, and say with him that the work will be exceedingly useful to the Biblical Student; to the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; to the church in general; and to all serious enquirers after truth.

MORMONISM.

We extract the following from 'The Daily Sun,' published at Cincinnati; from which it would seem that Elder Adams is indefatigable in his exertions to promote the cause of truth. The reporter, however, has made a grand mistake in saying that Elder Adams stated that the Book of Mormon was a record of the lost ten tribes of Israel; he knows better. The Book of Mormon is a record of the descendants of Joseph, who left Jerusalem during the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah. They of course were naturally connected with the ten tribes, but were only a few individuals of them, and not the lost ten tribes of Israel.

"MORMONISM.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. Adams, a Mormon Elder, delivered a lecture at College Hall, to a crowded house He proved that the Book of Mormon was a record of the lost ten tribes of Israel, and that it was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, and that its appearance would be just before the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and in an age when creeds of all kinds deluged the earth, and when the priests had turned the gospel into a trap to make money by, entirely subverting the order and spirit of the gospel, which is spoken of by the prophets as a deep sleep, from which they are to be awakened by the new Book, the Book of Mormon, which will again renew the spirit of the gospel as preached by the disciples, introducing again the working of miracles, speaking in unknown tongues, revelations from God, and other wonderful knowledge and power supposed to have been taken from the earth for the last eighteen hundred years! He ridiculed with great severity, the creeds of the prevailing denominations of the day, intimated that their upholders were afraid to meet him in debate, claimed the utmost sanctity and holiness for the "Latter Day Saints," prayed for his congregation to be instructed in the ways of truth, gave newspaper editors and their reporters a slap in the mouth, and said that the self-constituted church authorities would not give up their holds of making money and a good living for the glorious truths of Mormonism without a struggle, pointed to the persecution of his people, and rejoiced exceedingly in the hope he entertained that the world would speedily be regenerated and the glorious truths of the gospel as preached by the Mormons spread to the remotest bounds of the earth.

Whatever this new doctrine may be, it is extremely pleasing to the world, and death to the constituted church creeds of every name but that of Mormon. It is destined to spread, for every man that takes it upon him to speak in its favor, is fully competent to make out his case. One is very much surprised to see with what facility they prove their doctrine from the holy scriptures. Mr. Adams remarked, that he did not care whether a man believed the Book of Mormon or not, so that he came forward with a broken heart, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and in baptism for the remission of sins—let him come forth, and if God did not reveal to him the truths of the Book of Mormon, he need not believe it. Mr. Adams is expected to lecture in this city again on Sunday next."

There are a few editorial remarks in the above that are worthy of our notice. Mr. Curtis states that "whatever this new doctrine is it is extremely pleasing to the world and death to the constituted church creeds of every name but that of Mormon." We think if Mr. Curtis had travelled with the Saints through their various persecutions he would not have thought the doctrine to be so extremely pleasing; his remarks however are not altogether inapplicable, for whenever truth is presented in its native simplicity to the understanding of man, it recommends itself to their consciences; it vibrates with those chords of honor and integrity that are cherished by every philanthropist and man of truth; and being of a pure and celestial nature, like the *sun*, it ever shines, and sheds its genial rays on all that comes within its reach; its luminous beams also "bring to light the hidden works of darkness;" and hence, as Mr. Curtis has very properly said, "it is death to the constituted church creeds of every name but that of Mormon." He thinks that "it is destined to spread; for every one that takes upon him to speak in its favor is fully competent to make out his case." But what is the reason? Is it because they are men of greater erudition, talent, learning, or experience, than other men? No! They are about the same kind of beings as the rest of mankind; why then are they so competent to make out their case? Mr. Curtis says, "one is very much surprised to see with what facility they prove their doctrines from the holy scriptures." This then is the secret; their being able to prove their doctrines from the Holy Scriptures, is the reason why they are "fully competent to make out their case;" this is the reason why Mormonism "is destined to spread;" and this is the reason why it is "death to the constituted church creeds of every name." The bible is presented in its native simplicity, and they either die a natural death, or are killed by the Mormons with the bible.

THE MORMONS.

ARLINGTON HOUSE, Oct. 16, 1842.

GEN. J. G. BENNETT—

SIR:—

Some time since, I addressed a letter to Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, in answer to a letter of his, introducing to my "kind attention" a friend of his from the Holy City of Nauvoo. In this letter I expressed my regret that the quarrel between him and John C. Bennett should have at all found its way to the public eye, this being the sole cause of placing him in his present awkward situation. I likewise commiserated with him in his affliction, and signed myself, at the conclusion of my letter, as his friend, which I really am, and the friend of all

good Mormons, as well as other good men.—Why should I not be Joseph Smith's friend? He has done nothing to injure me, nor do I believe he has done any thing to injure ex-Governor Boggs of Missouri. The Governor, no doubt, under strong feelings, may have thought and believed that Smith, had preconcerted the plan for his assassination; but there is no legal evidence whatever of that fact. None by which an unprejudiced jury would convict any man, yet to send this man into Missouri, under the present requisition, would be an act of great injustice, as his ruin would be certain. How could any man, against whom there is a bitter religious prejudice, escape ruin, being in the circumstances of Smith? Look at the history of past ages—see the force of fanaticism and bigotry in bringing to the stake some of the best of men; and in all these cases the persecutors had their pretexts, as well as in the case of the Mormon chief. Nothing follows its victim with such deadly aim as religious zeal, and therefore nothing should be so much guarded against by the civil power.

Smith, I conceive, has just as good a right to establish a church, if he can do it, as Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Fox, or even King Henry the Eighth. All these chiefs in religion had their opponents, and their people their persecutors. Henry the Eighth was excommunicated, body and bones, soul and all, by his Holiness the Pope; still the Church of England has lived, as well as all the other sects. Just so it will be with the Mormons They may kill one Prophet, and confine in chains half his followers, but another will take his place, and the Mormons will still go ahead.

One of their Elders said to me, when conversing on this subject, that they were like a mustard plant—"If you don't disturb it, the seed will fall and multiply; and if you kick it about, you only give the seed more soil, and it will multiply the more." Undertake to convince them that they are wrong, and that Smith is an impostor, and the answer is, laying the hand on the heart—"*I know in my own soul that it is true, and want no better evidence. I feel happy in my faith, and why should I be disturbed?*" Now I cannot see but what this is the sentiment that governs all religiously disposed persons, their object being heaven and happiness, no matter what their church or their creed. They therefore cannot be put down while the constitution of the United States offers them protection, in common with all other sects, and while they believe that their eternal salvation is at stake. From what I know of the people, I fully believe that all the really sincere Mormons would die sooner than abandon their faith and religion.

Gen. J. C. Bennett has stated that, to conquer the Mormon Legion it would require five to one against them, all things taken into consideration, and that they will die to a man sooner than give up their Prophet. Now, is the arrest of this man worth such a sacrifice of life as must necessarily follow an open war with his people? The loss of from one to three thousand lives will no doubt follow in an attempt to accomplish an object not in the end worth a button.

Persecute them, and you are sure to multiply them. This is fully proved since the Missouri persecution, as, since that affair, they have increased one hundred fold.

It is the best policy, both of Missouri and Illinois, to let them alone; for if they are drove farther west they may set up an independent government, under which they can worship the Almighty as may suit their taste. Indeed I would recommend to the Prophet to pull up stakes and take possession of the Oregon territory in his own right, and establish an independent empire. In one hundred years from this time, no nation on earth could conquer such a people. Let not the history of David be forgotten. If the Prophet Joseph would do this, millions would flock to his standard and join his cause. He conld then make his own laws by the voice of revelation, and have them executed like the act of one man.

With respect to myself, I would just repeat that I am the Prophet's friend, and the friend of his people, merely from sympathy, as my arm has ever been lifted on the side of the persecuted and oppressed. I have never in my life followed the fat ox, nor bowed for a favor on my own account to mortal man. While I despise the purse-proud man, I am proud to the proud man and humble to the humble, and, whese men were contending, have ever thrown myself on the weakest side.

By inserting this communication, it is presumed that no one will hold the Herald responsible for the sentiments it contains; yet I have no doubt that there are thousands of independent, liberal minded men in this country who think as I do.

Neither the Mormon Prophet nor his people can add anything to my fortune or reputation. I expect nothing from them—they are a poor and industrious people, and have nothing to give. I am influenced in my conduct towards them by a spirit of benevolence and mercy, and hope the Governor and State of Illinois will act in like manner. It is true I was commissioned

in their legion, through the instrumentality of their enemy, General J. C. Bennett, an act entirely of their own, without my agency; but I was as much their friend before as since. The Missouri persecution fixed my attention and commiseration on the people.

It must be recollected, too, that the Mormon Prophet and his people are the most ardent friends and promoters of literature and science. These are elementary principles in their social system, and this, certainly, is contrary to every thing like despotism.

I hope, therefore, and with great deference express that hope that Ex-Governor Boggs will withdraw his demand for the Prophet, and let these poor people rest in peace. Both he and Governor Carlin will feel much more at peace with themselves by quashing the whole proceeding.

Most respectfully, your humble servant,

JAMES ARLINGTON BENNET,
Counsellor at Law, &c.

[*N. Y. Herald.*

CONFERENCE MINUTES.

At a general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, held at Sewell Street meeting house, Salem, Mass. commencing on Friday Sept. 9th 1842, agreeable to adjournment of a special conference of May 28. The meeting was called to order at half past two o'clock, P. M. and opened with prayer by Elder Maginn.

Elder W. Richards, of the Quorum of the Twelve, was unanimously called to the Chair, but on his requesting to decline the vote was rescinded, when Elder E. Snow was called to the chair, and Elder E. P. Maginn was chosen Secretary. The President then stated the object of the conference, and gave some useful instruction upon the propriety of the punctual attendance of the Saints at times of conference, &c., and as the session was not full in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, it was thought advisable that the business of the conference be laid over to Saturday.

Elder Richards followed upon the same subject at considerable length, showing the necessity of a union of effort and concentration of action, &c. It was then motioned and carried that the conference adjourn till Saturday at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Saturday morning, 10 o'clock, A. M. the conference convened and was opened with prayer by the President, when the different Quorums were presented and arranged in their respective order, as follows, viz:—Quorum of the Twelve, 1—High Priests, 2—Seventies, 2—Elders, 13—Priests, 6—Teachers, 1—Deacons, 1.

It was then motioned and carried, that the conference receive reports from the different churches that constitute this conference, when brother John Bettis, (Clerk of Salem) represented the church at Salem to consist of 83, including 3 elders, 3 priests, 2 teachers, 1 deacon; 4 have removed by letter, 1 died, and 2 have been excluded.

Elder Sweet represented the Church at Northbridge, consisting of 36 members, including 2 Elders, 1 priest, and 1 teacher, in good standing.

Elder A. R. Tewksbury represented the church at Boston, consisting of 77 members, including 3 elders and 3 priests.

Elder Nathaniel Holmes represented the church at Georgetown, consisting of 33 members, including 4 elders and 2 priests, all in good standing but one; making an increase of twelve since last conference.

Elder william Huchins represented the church at New Bedford, consisting of 17 members, including 2 priests and 1 teacher, in good standing.

Elder Eames represented the church at Holliston, consisting of 12 members, including 1 elder; one added by baptism since last conference.

Elder E. P. Maginn represented the church at Peterboro, N. H. consisting of 100 members, 1 elder, 1 priest, 1 teacher, and 2 deacons, all in good standing; 1 excluded.

Also at Gilsum, consisting of 20 members, some have removed. Likewise at Lowell, Mass. consisting of 36 members and 2 priests; and stated that he was almost exhausted from excessive labors, having the charge of four or five large branches, all of which he had built up the past year. Stated that he was unable to represent the New Salem, Wendell, and Leverett branches, as he had not found time to visit them since last conference, and appealed to the conference in strong terms for assistance.

Elder Snow stated that there were three members and one elder at Medway; also, three at Medfield, not organized.

Elder Robert Dixon gave an account of his labors, which called forth some very appropriate remarks from Elder Richards and other elders upon the impropriety of elders travelling from one end of the country to the other, excite an interest, and report that they could hardly leave the people, such was their desire to hear the Gospel, without their remaining to fulfil the call.

It was then motioned and carried that the conference take a recess till 2 o'clock.